

Clinical Laboratory Update

June 2020

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From the desk of the Public Health Laboratory Director

MHDL publishes work on both drug-resistant gonorrhea and COVID-19

MHDL staff recently co-authored an article entitled, "[Strengthening United States Response to Resistant Gonorrhea in Wisconsin](#)," published in the Spring 2020 issue of the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) Lab Matters magazine, as well as another manuscript, "[Loss of Taste and Smell as Distinguishing Symptoms of COVID-19](#)," published in the June 2020 issue of Clinical Infectious Diseases.

COVID-19 results reported to WEDSS for surveillance and case follow-up

Per WI DHS requirements, MHDL reports COVID-19 results to the Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System (WEDSS) within 24 hours of detection, including positive antibody test results and both positive and negative NAAT results. Reportable results are automatically transmitted twice daily from the MHD Laboratory Information System to the state to be input into WEDSS. Disease reports in WEDSS include patient name, address, phone number, date of birth, race, ethnicity, sex, date of onset, county of residence, and other facts required by public health, depending on the information provided by the agency requesting the test. Once a result is available in WEDSS, the appropriate local health department is alerted, based on the patient's address, for necessary case investigation and follow-up.

MHDL accepting patient-collected genital swabs

MHDL now accepts patient-collected vaginal and penile swabs for *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (GC) culture and antibiotic susceptibility testing (AST). The Specimen Type section of the [MHDL Microbiology Requisition form](#) has been updated to include a "Patient-collect" option under "Swab (Genital)," with a line to specify the source. Patient collection instructions can be provided by MHDL upon request.

Data for COVID-19 testing performed at MHDL during the month of June is included as a supplement to this report.

Links to related information & data:

[MHDL COVID-19 Testing Instructions](#)

[MHD COVID-19 Situation](#)

[WSLH Laboratory Surveillance Report](#)

Sexually Transmitted Infections

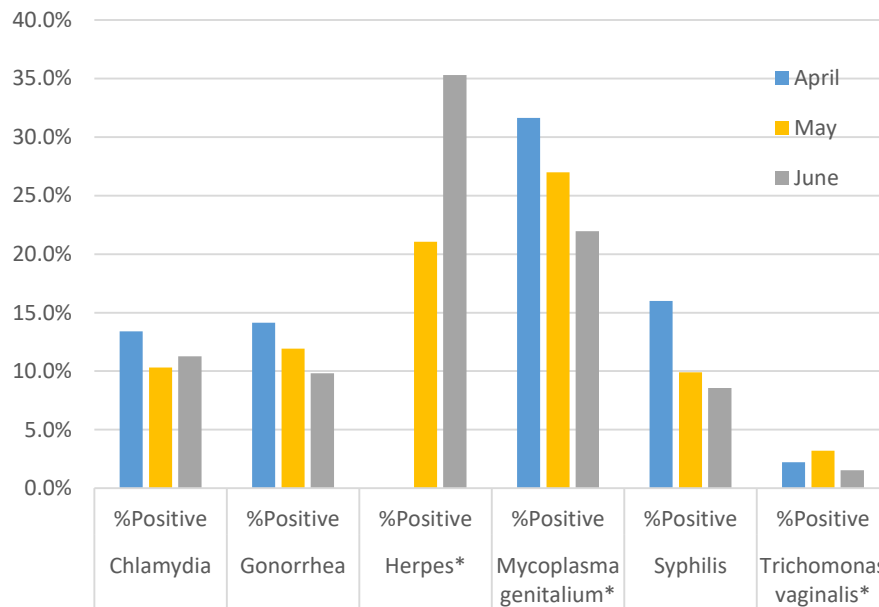


Figure 1: Percent positivity for specimens screened using molecular or serological assays for the given organism.

*Not reportable as per WI DHS 145.04 (3) (a)

Viral Surveillance

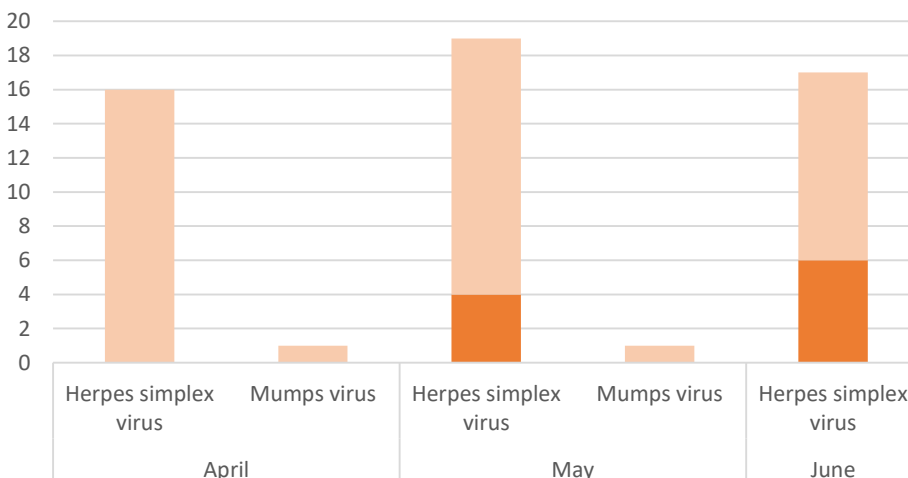


Figure 2: Specimens tested using molecular methods.

Note: Height of bar indicates number of specimens tested.

Darker bars indicate DNA/RNA detected by virus culture, real-time PCR and/or nucleotide sequencing analysis.

Connect with your health department:



New HIV Infections

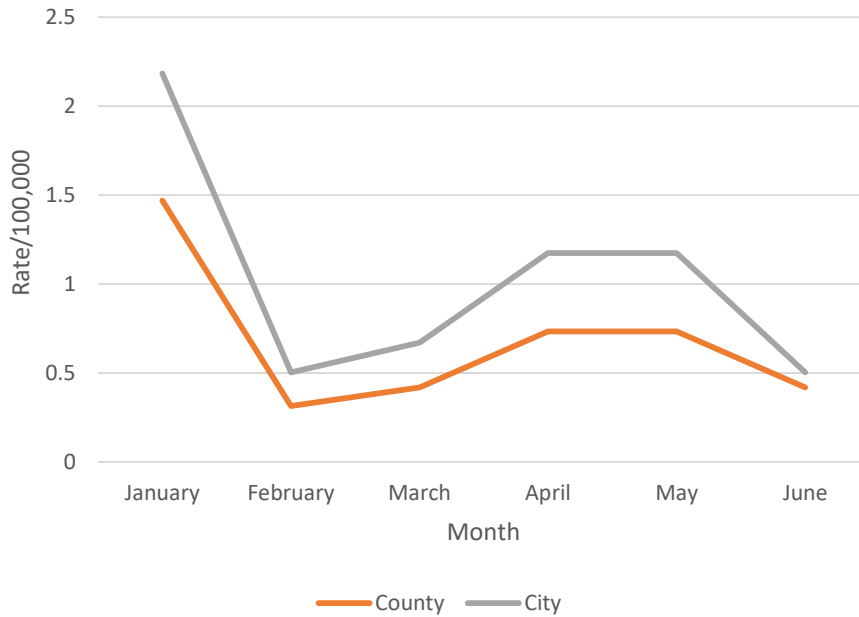


Figure 3: Monthly comparison of rate of new HIV infections in Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee, using data obtained from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Numbers are provisional and subject to change.

For statewide HIV data, visit:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/hiv/data.htm>

Syphilis Surveillance

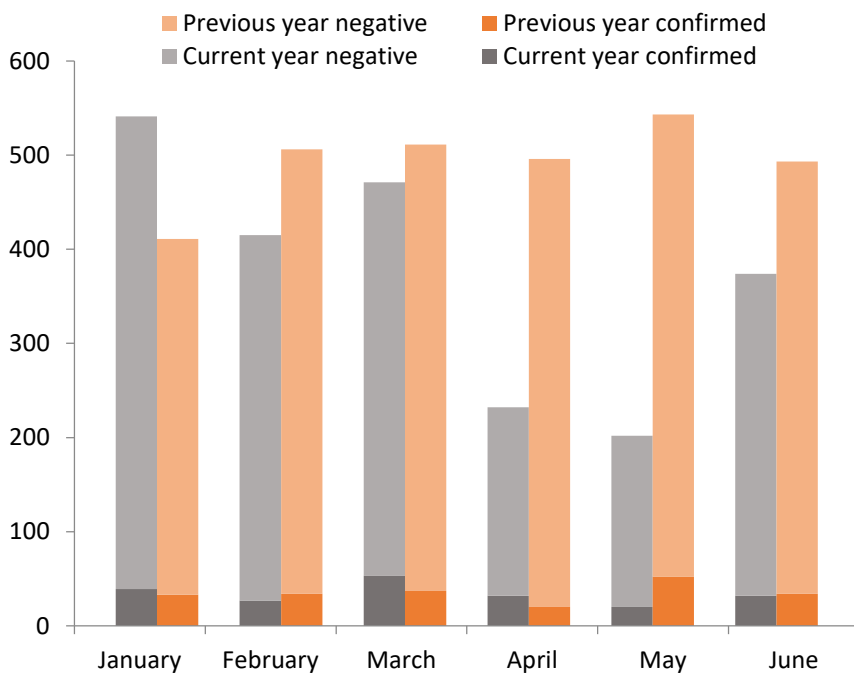


Figure 4: Monthly comparison of syphilis data with year over year comparisons.

Number of specimens screened at MHD, darker bars represent confirmed tests.

Gonorrhea Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing

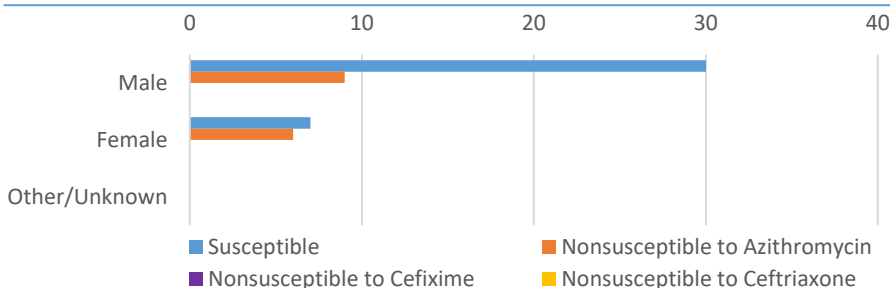


Figure 5: Antibiotic susceptibility profile of Gonorrhea isolates identified in males and females. In June 2020, 13 of 52 cultures tested were found to be nonsusceptible to Azithromycin according to CLSI guidelines. MHD tests for antibiotic resistance to Azithromycin, Ceftriaxone, Cefixime and Gentamicin.

Sexually Transmitted Infections by Source

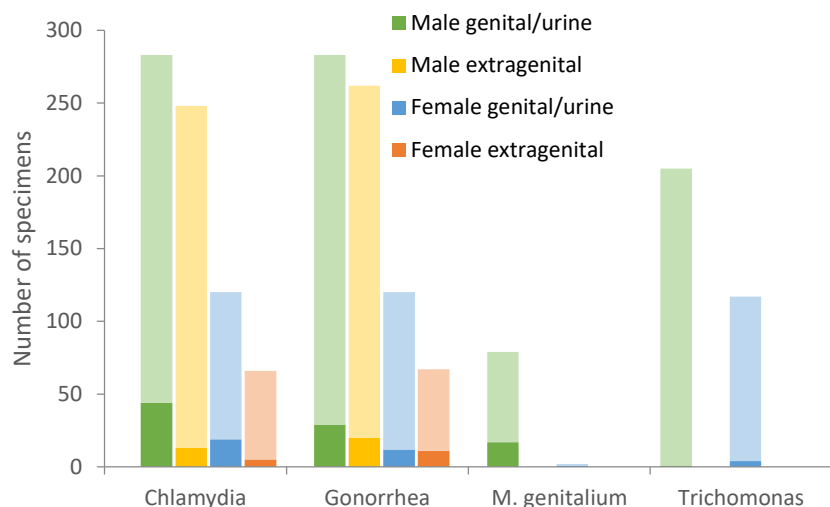


Figure 6: Distribution of STIs detected using NAAT. In June 2020, 10.7% of male and 12.9% of female specimens screened were positive for Chlamydia. 9.0% of male and 12.3% of female specimens were positive for Gonorrhea. 21.5% of male and 1 of the 2 female specimens were positive for *M. genitalium*. 0.5% of male specimens and 3.4% of female specimens were positive for *Trichomonas*.

Note: Darker bars indicate positive specimens.

Legionella Testing

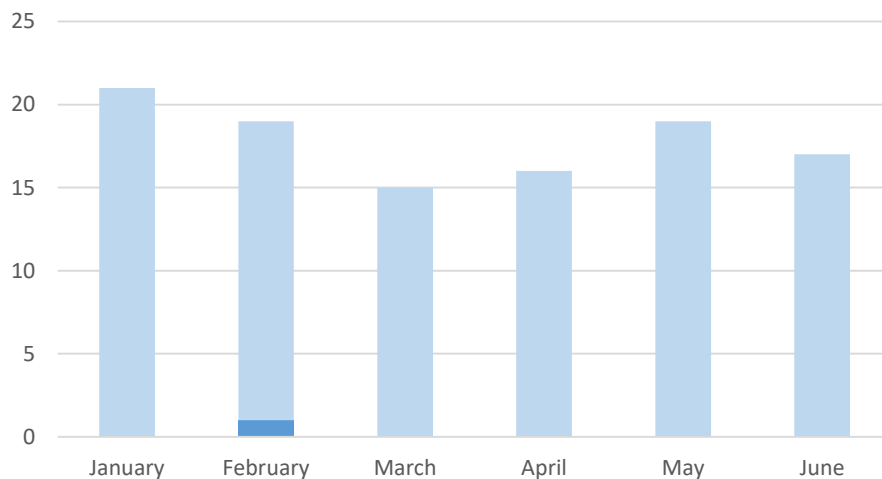


Figure 7: Clinical specimens tested using culture and molecular methods.

*MHDL is one of the **CDC ELITE** certified sites for environmental *Legionella* testing. See the Winter 2019 issue of the [APHL Bridges newsletter](#) for more information.

*Note: Darker bars indicate confirmed *Legionella pneumophila* by culture and/or real-time PCR.*